

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRIDGE 00859 291613Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SS-15 CPR-01 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5012
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRIDGETOWN 0859

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, XL
SUBJECT: BRITISH TO UPGRAD DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN BARBADOS

1. DEPUTY BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER TOLD DCM PRIVATELY TODAY MARCH 28 THAT HMG WILL RAISE ITS DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN BARBADOS FROM CLASS FOUR TO CLASS THREE POST EFFECTIVE UPON ARRIVAL OF NEW HIGH COMMISSIONER STANLEY ARTHUR SCHEDULED APRIL 25. BRITISH APPARENTLY HAVE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM SIMILAR TO OURS; I.E. WASHINGTON IS CLESS ONE WHILE LOWEST CLASS POST IS FOUR.

2. AMONG REASONS FOR THE UPGRADING WAS THE DECISION THAT ARTHUR, IN ADDITION TO BEING HIGH COMMISSIONER TO BARBADOS, WOULD BE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE (BGR) TO WEST INDIES ASSOCIATED STATES. THIS MEANS THAT OFFICE OF BGR WILL NO LONGER BE LOCATED IN ST. LUCIA FOLLOWING RECENT RETIREMENT OF BGR LE TONQ. FORMER BGR OFFICE IN ST. LUCIA WILL BE DOWNGRADED TO THAT OF DEPUTY BGR AND PRESENT DEPUTY BGR OFFICES IN ANTIGUA AND ST. VINCENT WILL BE EVEN FURTHER SCALED DOWN.

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3. IT MADE NO SENSE TO HAVE POLITICAL HEAD (BGR) IN ST. LUCIA WHILE HEAD OF BRITISH DEVELOPMENT DIVISION WAS RESIDENT IN BARBADOS, DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER SAID. MOREOVER ONLY THREE OF TWELVE DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS WORKING IN HIGH COMMISSION IN BARBADOS WERE EXCLUSIVELY DETAILED TO BARBADIAN AFFAIRS. BGR WILL NOW BE ABLE TO SUPERVISE THEM DIRECTLY.

4. HMG HAD ALSO NOTED EXPANDING AMERICAN PRESENCE IN BRIDGETOWN AS WELL AS PRESENCE OF RESIDENT CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER AND VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR.

5. DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER INDICATED THAT HIGH COMMISSIONER ARTHUR WILL BE TRAVELLING FREQUENTLY TO LONDON AS WELL AS AMONG THE WEST INDIES ASSOCIATED STATES. HIGH COMMISSIONER WILL BE ATTENDING CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCES IN LONDON IN ANTICIPATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF ONE OR MORE STATES. HIS PERSONAL STAFF IN BRIDGETOWN WILL BE AUGMENTED BY A SECOND DEPUTY, WHO WILL OUTRANK THE PRESENT DEPUTY, ANOTHER CHANCELLOR, AND ANOTHER SECRETARY, WITH CORRESPONDING EXPANSION OF PHYSICAL FACILITIES.
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